



February 2, 2024

Hon. Bill Lee
Chairman
Republican Governors Association
1st Floor, State Capitol
Nashville, TN 37243

Dear Governor Lee:

On behalf of the Border Trade Alliance, we write regarding the Republican Governors Association recent statement in support of Texas Governor Greg Abbott and Texas' constitutional right to self-defense.

As an organization of public and private sector stakeholders whose livelihoods depend on a well-managed, properly resourced, and secure border, you will get no argument from us about the current administration's many failures on the border. We experience them every day.

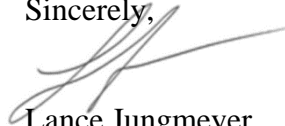
However, we are deeply concerned about a federal-state standoff that risks disruptions to legitimate cross-border trade and travel. As we experienced on various occasions last year, closures of international bridges and ports of entry cause significant harm to border communities, delay shipments, and increase costs for American consumers. We oppose them in all cases. Talk of more border closures and confrontations between law enforcement agencies diminishes the quality of life for border communities like Eagle Pass and erodes the economic competitiveness of the entire border region, the transit point for the \$2 million in trade that crosses the United States-Mexico border each minute.

Our southern neighbor imported nearly \$325 billion worth of Made-in-America goods in 2022, making Mexico our country's second largest export market, exceeding even all of Europe. It's not surprising that Texas, with its many ports stretching from El Paso to Brownsville, is the country's leading state for exports. We should demand a more secure border, but not at the expense of the mutually beneficial and job-creating U.S.-Mexico relationship.

The BTA believes we should pursue a border that is defined by security and efficient trade. On behalf of the cross-border trade community, we would encourage governors of both parties to work with the federal government in pursuit of these goals. The BTA extends its decades of experience in cross-border affairs and the U.S.-Mexico relationship as a resource to you and your gubernatorial colleagues.

Continued

Sincerely,



Lance Jungmeyer
Chairman



Britton Mullen
President

CC:

Alabama Governor Kay Ivey
Alaska Governor Mike Dunleavy
Arkansas Governor Sarah Sanders
Florida Governor Ron DeSantis
Georgia Governor Brian Kemp
Idaho Governor Brad Little
Indiana Governor Eric Holcomb
Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds
Louisiana Governor Jeff Landry
Mississippi Governor Tate Reeves
Missouri Governor Mike Parson
Montana Governor Greg Gianforte
Nebraska Governor Jim Pillen
Nevada Governor Joe Lombardo
New Hampshire Governor Chris Sununu
North Dakota Governor Doug Burgum
Ohio Governor Mike DeWine
Oklahoma Governor Kevin Stitt
South Carolina Governor Henry McMaster
South Dakota Governor Kristi Noem
Utah Governor Spencer Cox
Virginia Governor Glenn Youngkin
West Virginia Governor Jim Justice
Wyoming Governor Mark Gordon